LNG Terminal at Kochi

*109. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal for an LNG terminal at Kochi;

(b) if so, the present status of the project;

(c) the names of the companies included in the consortium;

(d) whether NTPC has agreed to be the potential customer; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. M/s Petronet LNG Limited (PLL), a Joint Venture Company promoted by four Public Sector Oil Companies, *viz.*, GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL), Oil and Natural Gas Coroporation Limited (ONGC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Indian Oil Corproation Limited (IOC) had decided to set up a 2.5 Million Metric Tons Per Annum (MMTPA) LNG Terminal at Kochi. Terminal at Kochi was conceived, based on proposed expansion of Kayamkulam Power Plant of NTPC.

Land for the project has been allotted at Puthuvypeen Island, Kochi. PLL has completed pre-project engineering activities and has also obtained necessary statutory clearances and approvals from departments concerned. However, NTPC has gone for International Competitive bidding for procurement of Natural Gas/LNG for the proposed expansion of Kayamkulam Power Project from 350 MW to 2300 MW. PLL has participated in the NTPC bid for providing services for regasification and transportation of re-gasified LNG for the project. As LNG projects have strict 'Take or Pay' Clause, PLL will take steps to execute the project if either their bid is accepted by NTPC or alternative marketing tie-ups for atleast 60% of the proposed terminal capacity is achieved.

US-India economic dialogue

*110. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether senior officers of India and the United States held

discussions on financial and economic development and the global efforts to combat terrorist financing;

(b) if so, whether these discussions were part of the enhanced US-India Economic dialogue;

(c) what was the outcome of the talks held and what is the latest position so far achieved by discussing these issues; and

(d) by when a final agreement is likely to be reached?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Various macro-economic issues, fiscal situation, fiscal responsibility legislation, issues relating to financial sector, and combating financing of terrorism were discussed. Certain areas for cooperation in future were identified. These include, strengthening tax administration, sharing of experience in Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) and convergence of capital and commodity markets, pension reforms etc.

The objective of the Forum is to strengthen the financial and economic relationship between India and the United States of America through regular contact between economic policy-makers from both the countries. It is a continuing dialogue.

Development aid by World Bank

*111. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has made out a compelling case for increasing development aid in order to eliminate poverty and strengthen country's literacy and health programmes under the millennium development goals;

(b) if so, whether the Indian delegation defended the plea before IMF and World Bank for increased aid flows;

(c) if so, to what extent both World Bank and IMF have agreed to provide more assistance in view of good performance shown by India in these sectors; and

(d) what is the total aid both World Bank and IMF have agreed to provide for further implementation of the plan?